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BOOK TREASURES
OF
MÆCENAS

BY
JOHN PAUL BOCOCK

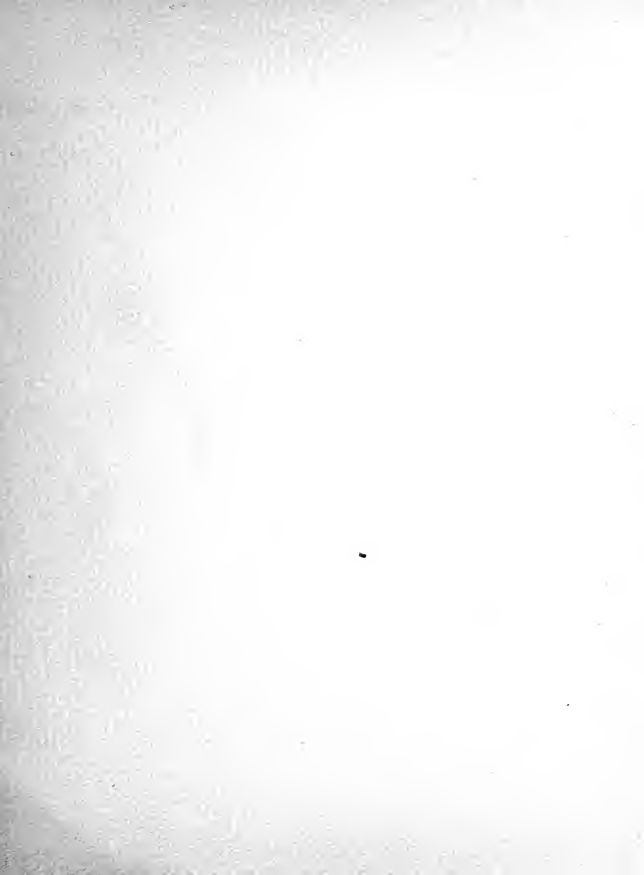


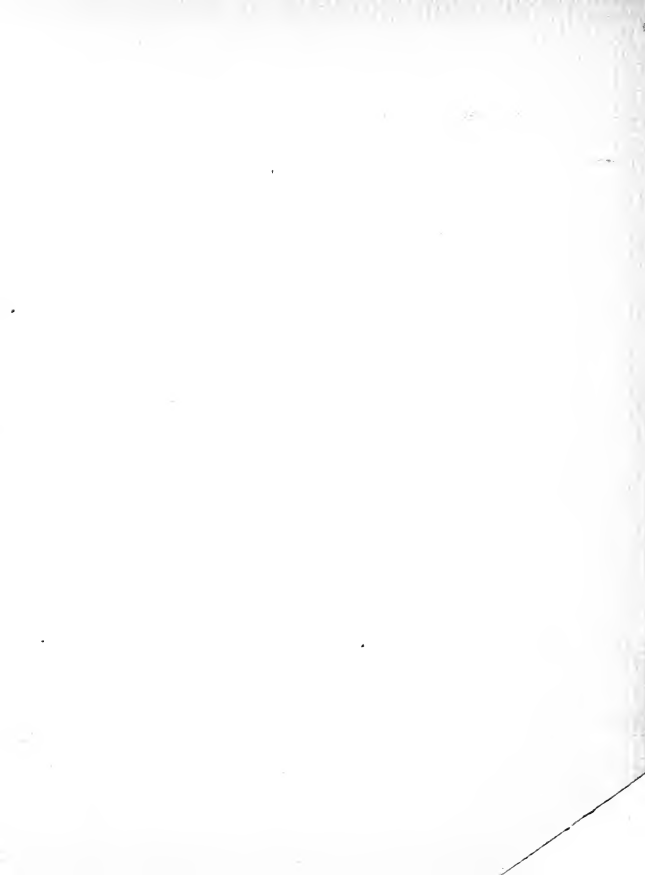
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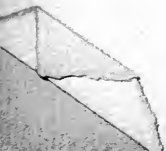
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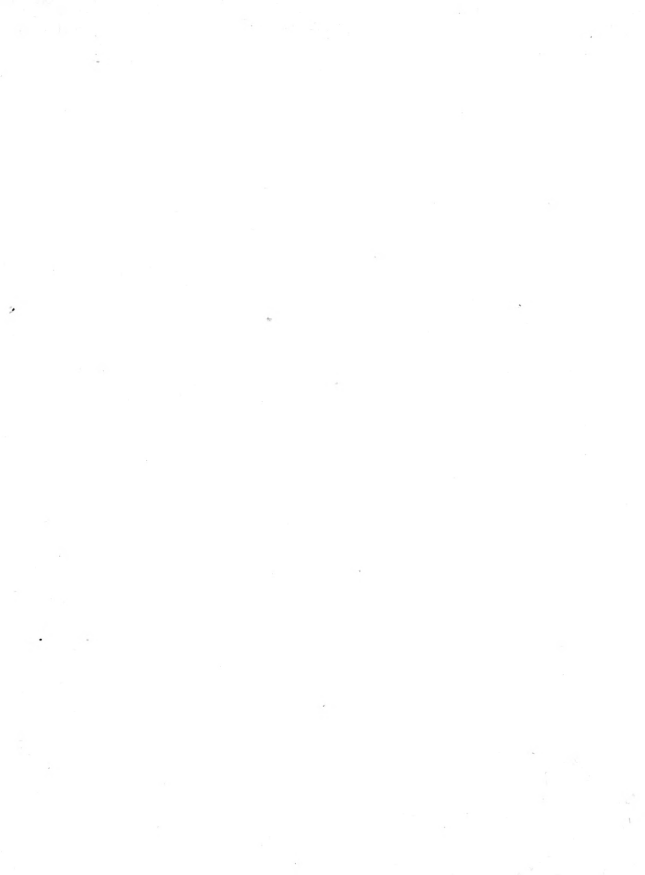
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John Paul Bocock

BOOK TREASURES
OF
MÆCENAS

BY
JOHN PAUL BOCOCK

New York
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1904

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POEMS

BY

JOHN PAUL BOCOCK

DEDICATED TO HIS CHILDREN

BY

THEIR MOTHER

ALDINE BOOK CO.

NOV 25 '42

LIBRARY SETS

IN MEMORIAM

- " FAREWELL! since never more for thee
The sun comes up our eastern skies;
Less bright henceforth shall sunshine be
To some fond hearts and saddened eyes.
- " There are who for thy last long sleep
Shall sleep as sweetly never more;
Shall weep because thou canst not weep,
And grieve that all thy griefs are o'er.
- " Sad thrift of love! the loving breast
On which the aching head was thrown
Gave up the weary head to rest
But kept the aching for its own."

JOHN PAUL BOCOCK, who died in Wayne, Pennsylvania, on the seventeenth of June, in a cottage in which, he wrote a friend three months ago, he had expected "to spend some happy days," was a man of singularly fine taste and of unusual attainments. Born and educated in the capital of the Old Dominion, where his family had long been prominent in political and social circles, he brought with him to his work in the North the best elements of Southern culture. For many years he labored successfully in journalism, having been connected editorially with several of the leading papers of Philadelphia and New York. His talents were of the most versatile nature, his contributions to the periodicals, which were numerous, comprising stories, essays, and articles on a great variety of subjects, and poetry of an excellent quality. His writings even on commonplace topics bore the marks

of literary purpose and effort. All through his career, he was deeply influenced by a love for the classics, and there were not many men in the country who out-ranked him as a Horatian scholar. He has left behind him one of the largest collections in the world of editions of his favorite Latin poet, which he gathered from all quarters. Personally, he was of the most lovable character, and possessed of a happy faculty of humor which enabled him to make light even of the dire pain and distress of the long and severe illness which brought his bright and useful life prematurely to an end.

GEORGE HARVEY.

Harper's Weekly, July 4, 1903.

Acknowledgment is due to the publishers of the following periodicals for their courteous permission to reprint certain of the poems contained in this volume: *Scribner's Magazine*, *The Critic*, *Leslie's Weekly*, *The Reader*, *Truth*, *Town Topics*, *New York Tribune*, *New York Sun*, *New York World*, and *The Boston Globe*.

THE BOOK TREASURES OF MÆCENAS

GOLDEN Gospels of King Henry,
Writ in uncials of gold
On the vellum's royal purple,
By the cloistered scribes of old,—
In these pages Kings and sages
For a thousand years have pondered
On the Book that still is deathless
When the gold of earth is squandered.

How a splendid, patient cunning
Decked "the Romance of the Rose!"
In clear gold and gorgeous colors
Every page immortal glows;
Charles the Ninth has pored upon them,
But no trace of cruel fingers
Mars the fair leaves where the fragrance
Of the rose of love still lingers.

Shade of Gutenberg, bear witness
To the Bible twice immortal:
First and fairest book imprinted,
Lamp that guides to Heaven's portal;

Fust and Schoeffer, fit companion
To the Bible is your Psalter,
"Grandest treasure ever offered
Upon learning's holy altar."

Here the 1470 Virgil
Shows his face illuminated;
Here the Doge's vellum Livy
Tintoretto-decorated,
And St. Augustine, on vellum,—
Men would die for one such treasure,—
Stand with rows of priceless Caxtons
Waiting on Mæcenas' pleasure.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN

SWEET as she sat in the twilight dim
Echoed the strains of her Christmas hymn,
Swelling soft through the cozy gloom
And the wreathed grace of the firelit room,
Swelling and falling; and still it rang
To the tune of the song that the angels sang:

“Now, O Lord, for Thy tender grace,
For the deathless love in Thy pitying face,
For the pangs Thou hast borne that we might not bear,
For the blessed sense of Thy constant care—
For Thy dear sake be our sins forgot;
Change our hearts, Thou who changest not!

“Help us, Lord, in the dark and cold,
To feed Thy lambs. From the sheltering fold
Some have wandered and lost their way,
Some have found that the wolves betray,
Some its shelter have never known—
And yet, and yet they are all Thine own!

“Now, in the glow of the Christmas-tide,
For the sake of that tree on which Thou hast died,
May there be never a Christmas tree
But is blessed with the love we would learn from Thee
For the poor, and the weak, and the lost—for them,
As for us, rose the Star over Bethlehem.”

IN THE LIBRARY

HERE in immemorial peace
Sorrow finds a swift surcease,
And Care knits her "ravelled sleeve"
With the dreams that poets weave.

Here the vines that Virgil trained
Hang with clusters purple-veined;
Here the ilex starts to view
Murmuring songs that Horace knew;

And that famed Bandusian font,
Crystal-clear, as was its wont,
Bubbles over with the glee
Of a lilt to Lalagé.

Here, from its Arcadian wood,
Pan, half seen, half understood,
Pipes his wild, bewitching strain
Till the Dryads dance again.

Charlemagne comes hunting here,
Roland, too, and Oliver;—
Hark! the music of that horn
"On Fontarabia's echoes borne."

Old-world phantoms, dearer far
Than the new world's creatures are—
Let the glittering riot pass,
Hic manet felicitas.

TO THE BANDUSIAN FOUNTAIN

Horace, Lib. III., Ode XIII.

FOUNTAIN of Bandusia, shimmering crystal clear,
Here is wine that should be thine, flowers, too, are here;
Thine to-morrow be a kid
In whose budding brow are hid
Horns that hint of dalliance and of battle's shock
All in vain: poor firstling of the wanton flock—
His the sacrificial blood
That shall stain thy sparkling flood.

When the Dog Star rages, Summer's burning heat
Leaves untouched thy cooling wave and dewy shadows, sweet
To the ploughman's weary ox
And the thirst-tormented flocks.
One among the famous fountains thou shalt be;
Lo, I sing the rocky cleft beneath the ilex tree
From whose hollow, rooted deep,
All thy babbling waters leap.

THE PALISADES

NOW bright, now dark, now swift, now slow
The lordly Hudson sweeps below
The everlasting hills, that stood
When Hendrik's ship first ploughed the flood.

High on each battlemented crest
The eagle built his lonely nest;
With loving awe the Indian viewed
Their immemorial solitude.

Prone at their feet the ocean tide
Beats vainly at the vast divide;
Far past their castellated walls
The Adirondack fountain falls.

Farewell, ye mountain grenadiers,
Ye, too, are "food for powder"; years,
Grace, grandeur, into fragments blown,
To make a vandal's paving-stone.

SPRING

S WALLOWS from the balmy South
Brought the roses of her mouth,
Spirits from the flashing seas
Lent her eyes their witcheries.

All the world 's renewed for her,
Youth's perennial pulses stir,
Thrilling through the frozen ground.
Laughing to the blue profound.

From the graves of yesteryear,
That hold all we once held dear,
From the vale and mountainside
Where earth's fairest children died,

Lo, now blossoming to birth,
The new offspring of the earth—
Gone the yellow leaf of woe—
In eternal beauty glow.

A BATTLE-HYMN

GOD of our country, with Thy might
Bless Thou the battle for the right!
Let every thundering turret-gun
Proclaim Thy righteous will be done.
Through hail of shot and clang of steel,
From flaming deck and quivering keel,
To Thee our hearts we lift. Oh, Thou
Who helped our fathers, help us now!

To Thee we dip our colors low
That never yet have bowed to foe;
Then to the bullets and the breeze,
The stern contention of the seas,
We fling their starry folds on high,
And this must be our battle-cry:
"Old Glory flew above the *Maine* —
Ten foemen for each comrade slain!"

On our proud banner be no stain
Of secret fraud, of sordid gain,
Of struggling patriots betrayed,
Of free men's blood in lucre paid;

Blue be its azure as the skies,
As rich its red as honor's dyes,
As bright its stars as those that keep
Their vigil where our martyrs sleep.

To none but Thee, oh Lord, we bow,
Nor ever did, and will not now;
Nor ever has our standard been
Dragged in the dust by king or queen.
This flag we serve east, west, north, south,
And now proclaim from cannon's mouth:
"Let vengeance still be Thine; and we
Thy sword to scour the western sea."

BOHEMIA

SORACTE stands no longer deep
In snow, but budding to the Spring;
Where the boy Flaccus lay asleep,
On Vultur's side, the doves take wing;

Bandusia's fountain, crystal clear,
Leaps to the south wind's soft caress,
And Faunus hails the youthful year,
Blithe in his glad, green wilderness.

Come, let us follow gaily where
The smiling, short, gray poet trod;
Hark! Aufidus rolls on the air
And headlong Anio gems the sod;

Beneath this ilex, Tyndaris,
Her classic beauty all aglow,
Sings to her lute of Circe's kiss,
A love-song of the long ago.

Is this Bohemia? Aye, the moon
Spells her white magic on the air,
And on the water writes a rune
That laughs away old Time and Care.

Here come the loves of other days,
Yea, even the dead whom we hold dear;
Here every poet wears the bays
And every warrior shakes the spear.

High o'er this vale thy cold, white star,
Oh, Destiny, stay for to-night!
Fame, from thy temple shining far,
Blot out for us the garish light.

To-morrow we 'll attack the height,
Brave a new wound for every scar,
Wage a new battle for the right
And hitch our wagons to the star,

But, oh, to-night—we would forget,
Here, 'mid the clusters of the vine,
That even this glorious rose is wet
With the fond dews of Auld Lang Syne!

A LITTLE GIRL'S FEVER-DREAM

(To Pauline)

I DREAMED I was up there!
And I saw a lovely stream
Run bubbling by in the meadow of sky,
And it sang to me in my dream

A strange, sweet song of rest—
I think I can hear it now—
"Come, cool your burning breast
And bathe your fevered brow;

Wash, and you shall be clean,
Whiter even than snow."
I wondered what it could mean,
And I longed so much to go!

Oh, for the cooling bliss
Of that current, crystal clear,
To plunge to its gentle kiss—
With never a thought of fear!

Once more, perhaps, I may
See that sweet land—and then
I will lie and drink on that crystal brink
And I 'll never be thirsty again!

HORACE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Book I., Ode XII.

"*Quem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri.*"

Ad Theodorum Augustum

WHAT man, what hero, Muse of mine,
What god shall we, in notes divine
Of harp or thrilling flute proclaim,
Till joyous echo sound his name
In Helicon's umbrageous coasts,
On Pindus, or where Hæmus boasts
Of trees that rushed in eager throng,
Of streams that paused at Orpheus' song;
Orpheus, Calliope's own child,
Whose wondrous art the winds beguiled,
And even the listening oaks inclined
To follow down the charmed wind.

To Romulus, and Numa's reign,
Cato, and Tarquin's haughty strain,
To Regulus, and valorous Scaur,
To unkempt Curius, great in war;
Old Hickory, aye, and him we call
Old Abe, best Romans of them all,
Log-cabin boys, low-sprung, high-souled—
Sing, Clio, to the great of old;

14 *HORACE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY*

To whom, when Time shall speak the word,
Columbia adds a glorious third,
Whose age matures through storm and strife,
While Duty crowns the strenuous life.

Scholar uncloistered, man of might,
Statesman and warrior for the right,
Administrator,—this thy son,
Columbia, merits thy "Well done!"
He brought our conquering banner home
As Honor bade, across the foam
Cervera dyed; by his decree
A new Republic gems the sea.
He keeps Old Glory flying far
As Honor bids, above the war
Which the brown bandit foe maintains
Against the hand that broke his chains.

As a Rough Rider leaps to meet
The fiery bronco's flying feet,
Bits the red mouth and grips the mane,
Bounds on the beast and scours the plain,
Subduing force by force, until
He wins a courser to his will;
So may each influence malign
Be moulded to his high design,
Each foe o'ercome in righteous wrath,
Each traitor driven from his path,
And this his People's will decreed:
"Success was thine, thyself succeed."

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY

O H day of all the circling year
To manhood and to duty dear—
To us who love the flag he saved,
To us who felt the pangs he braved,
To those whose veins are tingling still
With the red war's immortal thrill,
Thy glorious dawn shall ever be
A lasting pledge that we are free!

Free from the slave's ignoble fate,
Free from base prejudice, and hate,
Free to fling out the Stripes and Stars
Full to the rapturous airs of Heaven,
And know there 's not a stain that mars
The heritage to free men given!
Oh, sacred day, our latest breath
Shall honor Lincoln's life and death.

No pride nor pomp nor circumstance
Removed him from the humblest chance;
To the plain people whom he loved
His great soul ever faithful proved.
The land he saved, the homes he blest,
Delight to hail him first and best,
Molded upon God's noblest plan,
Emancipator, martyr, man!

FUNSTON OF KANSAS

THE sunflowers bloom on the prairies, afar
From the blood and the bluster of tropical war;
The green fields of Kansas smile up to the sun,
The water-wheels whirr and the long furrows run;
The sunshine of Kansas is flooding the earth
With the splendor of springtime, creation's new birth;
The prairie winds whisper of ripening sheaves,
The barn swallows chirp 'round the nests in the leaves,
And Funston of Kansas is charging the foe
With a sword and a banner, a song and a blow.

Funston of Kansas, the right sort of man,
Right at the front when the fighting began,
Rushing an ambuscade, charging on faith;
Swimming a river, a rope in his teeth,
Crossing a bullet-swept bridge on a lope,
Running a race up the death-haunted slope;
Plunging right into the jungle ahead,
Leading his men as brave men should be led—
Oh, "young Lochinvar," in the brown khaki vest,
When came such a cavalier "out of the West"?

Here 's health to the Funstons of Kansas, the men,
Who 've carried Old Glory again and again

Wherever their country has called them to go,
Hot blood for the flag and cold steel for the men
Oh, mother of heroes, Columbia, for thee

A new song swells up from the isles of the sea.
The stars of thy flag in new glory shall rise
Through the battle-smoke clouding the Philippine skies,
And the graves of thy sons, slain for thee, shall attest
That of all they have loved, they still love thee best!

THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

MEN in the elder times
Baited the beasts in play,
And found it good to shed men's blood
To make a holiday.

The happiest to-day,
Since men and times have changed,
Is he whose feet on errands sweet
Have widest range.

The wretched, by the path
That leads to happiness,
Still stand on guard; their prayers reward
Those who help their distress.

But those who heedlessly
Pursue Life's narrow way
Intent on self alone, and pelf,
Miss the soul's holiday.

THE "NEW YORK"

BLUE be the billows thy proud keel
Shall furrow with its share of steel,
And brisk the breeze and blue the sky
'Neath which thy glorious flag shall fly!
Stout be the hearts that beat beneath
Each frowning turret's armored sheath,
And may the God of Battles pave
With fame thy path across the wave!

Faint o'er Lake Erie's shores the boom
Of Perry's guns salutes the tomb
Where 'neath the waves of Misery Bay
The *Lawrence* and *Niagara* lay;
And while a keel our waters rides
Who can forget *Old Ironsides*?
But none or all of them could vex
The calm of thy tremendous decks!

Glide glorious down thy launching ways
On this thy history's day of days,
Great cruiser, whose baptismal name
Ere it was thine was dear to Fame!
Go forth in all thy splendid might
To stop the wrong and speed the right,
And may thy thunderous broadside be
The trumpet-call of Victory!

OLD-FASHIONED WINTER

HAIL, genial glow of frosty health,
Old-fashioned Winter, hail!
Here 's welcome to thine icy wealth
And all thy glittering mail!

The ozone crackles overhead,
The runnel 'neath the hill
Crisps blithely in its little bed
And all at once is still!

What though thy snow be slush below,
Thy breath be sleet above—
Just for the sake of long ago
Here 's welcome and our love!

TO BARINE

(Horace, Carm. II., VIII).

BARINE, if your loveliness
Were by one perjury the less,
If your white hand or rosy smile
Betrayed one blemish for your guile,

I 'd trust you. But alas! instead,
Once you 've forsworn your pretty head,
With charms that still the brighter burn,
The heads of all our youth you turn.

Fair perjurer, would you be more fair,
Your mother's ashes quick forswear;
Mock heaven, night's silent pageant, aye,
The deathless gods enthroned on high.

Venus will jeer, the Nymphs applaud,
While Cupid, laughing at your fraud,
Still fiercely whets his burning darts
With blood from faithful lovers' hearts.

And still young wooers throng in droves,
New slaves! Not even your cast-off loves
Can bear to quit your faithless door,
Though threatening oft to come no more.

The mothers fear you for their boys;
Age dreads you! Cold amid their joys,
The young wives shudder lest your spell
Bewitch their lords who love them well.

THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR

FOR eyes whose vision can pierce the blue,
Where the sparrowhawk hangs like a mote in view.
For ears in which Nature's harmonies ring
As sweet as the music that sounds for a king.

For hands that grapple the nearest task,
And, tearing from Duty's face the mask
Selfishness set there long ago,
Show us the smile that we all would know.

For feet that are firm and swift and strong,
Tho' the way be rough and the race be long.
For sinews sturdy to stand the strain
Of a struggle with weariness and pain.

For a heart whose chords are attuned to love
The brute below and the God above,
That yearns to infancy's frightened cry
And the moan of the beggar passing by.

For Life, Hope's nurse, and for Hope herself;
For a modest share of the great world's pelf;
For friendship's grasp and a hearthstone bright
With the spark that kindles the darkest night.

HONOR-BOUND

(Broadway, October 31, 1896)

DOWN the deep cañon of the street,
Where continents in commerce meet,
A thunderburst of color swept,
A hundred thousand pulses leapt,
As patriots cheered with rapturous cry
Their best and bravest marching by.

Red, white, and blue, from curb to dome,
Old Glory flew, for God and home;
For all whose loss true hearts must break,
For country's and for honor's sake;
Nor yet with sword and booming gun,
As in the days of '61.

Flag of the free, who can forget
That once thy glorious folds were wet
With freemen's blood? And for all years
Since that dread time, our hopes and fears,
Our homes, and our fond hearts shall be
Forever honor-bound to thee!

THE EASTER LILY

EARTH, tender, sinful earth, had trembled at the shock.
But up in heaven there had been no weeping;
Its awful mystery the tomb of rock

In the black hush before the dawn was keeping;
Prone on their shields the weary guards lay sleeping;

A rose of Jericho, not far away,
Stirred in its petals, as a breeze came creeping
O'er Galilee, to greet the coming day!

Over the garden 'round that tomb,
Where never man had lain,
There breathed a promise in the gloom,
A thrill of rapturous pain!

The winged hosts, with bated breath,
To see Him triumph over Death,
From their high heaven looked down,
The universe in ecstasy
Waited for this—His victory,

Whose brow should wear the crown!

Man, heedless man, slept on; and one
Wee angel stole from near the throne
And sobbed a vigil by the stone.

A tiny tear, clear as a drop of dew,
Round as a pearl, rolled down—an angel's tear—
Fell in the mould and so was lost to view

A moment.

In that moment all things new
Became! And as afar proud chancicleer
To hail the risen Lord exultant crew,
The heavens glowed, as their dear king they knew,
Vanished the shades! High in th' empyrean's blue
A mighty pæan sounded, and there grew
Up from the ground where that small tear had rolled
An Easter lily with its heart of gold.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

NOT the joy of money-bags and not the pride of pelf,
Not the glow of righteous satisfaction with one's self;
Not the fervent Amen in a well-upholstered pew;
Nor a self-indulgence in the excellent and true!

Not a lofty pity for vice in her squalid den;
Not a thankfulness that we are not as other men—
But a warming into action of the cockles of the heart
And a generous intention to take some poor fellow's part!

Not in checks to buy red flannel for the little Hottentots,
Nor in sermons for the Crofters, up among the thrifty Scots,
Nor in richly crocheted mottoes in all kinds of colored wools,
Nor illuminated vellums, good advice, and praying-stools!

But in little acts of kindness, which like flowers 'neath the
snow
Raise a little mist of gratitude to show the heart below,
And in shaking hands sincerely with some sufferer and
leaving
In his palm, or hers, a trifle, just to help to stop the grieving!

MEMORIAL DAY, 1892

A GAIN they summon us, the years
Whose call was stormy once with tears,
Whose cry was fierce and wild with woe—
How soft their voices now, and low,
Among the graves, where heart's-ease grow!

No bugle stirs the blood to war,
No hillside shows the cannon's scar;
The winds are sweet with mignonette,
O gentle, healing years—and yet
Ye would not have our hearts forget!

Along the dear, accustomed way
Once more with wistful feet we stray,
Alone with our dead past; no sounds
From the rough world may pass these bounds,
'T is calm beside the low, green mounds.

Toil, passion, pride—not yours to sway
The heart on this its holy day;
Here Grief has learned to love her seat,
Here youth and age with reverence meet,
Mingling in one communion sweet.

O years, how tender is your touch
To souls that sorrow overmuch!
Deep down the daisied sod beneath,
The sabre crumbles in its sheath,
But deathless is affection's wreath!

THE PRISONER'S APPEAL

AH, pity me, sweet sisters, stricken more
Than is the common lot of womankind,
Shut in an alien dungeon, weeping sore
As one might weep who 'd left all hope behind—
Yet never doubting that the constant mind
Of innocence may in time unblind
Justice, who turned her back on me before—
Me, hapless me, alone and stricken sore!

Ah, pity me, all ye who never bore
Another's meed of sorrow; help unbind
The bonds of wrong that to its bleeding core
Cut my poor heart! See was the law designed
The weak and helpless to the dust to grind,
To seal the doom of innocence maligned,
The vials of decrepit spleen to pour—
On hapless me, alone and stricken sore!

The long night shrouds my cell, and, being o'er,
The long day comes for which all night I pined,
The weary day dies on the night's black shore,
The long night comes again upon the wind
To shadow Hope, sweet Hope that still enshrined
In my fond soul your pity has divined
Ere yet with aid my freedom to restore—
Ye succor me, alone and stricken sore.

A MADONNA OF THE HOSPITALS

MADONNA of the proud, pale face,
Beneath the cap of snow;
A minister of pitying grace,
You softly come and go.
Divine compassion's in the touch
Of your serene white hand;
They love you much who suffer much
Along life's borderland.

Madonna of the hospital,
Gowned all in spotless white;
However dark the day befall,
Your presence makes it bright.
There 's healing in your calm, dark eyes,
So grave, so deep, so true;
Oh, well the invalids may prize
Their bondage sweet to you!

THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING

(The Original Legend of the Christ-Child and the Chrysanthemum)

A LAGGARD morn! and the sombre wood
Shivered to wild flakes wearily flying,
For Earth was donning her weird white hood
Under the trees where the snow was lying!
Black were the ravens across the sky—
And chimes from the castle rang merrily
As under the trees, where the faggots lay,
An old man groped—and 't was Xmas day!

High o'er the vale where his poor hut stood
The castle reared its wonderful towers,
The sun that should shine on the evil and good
Alike, shone first on its tropical bowers,
Cherished and kissed them, so brave and bold—
And lingered there with a golden spark
After the hunt in the vale was cold,
And the sombre forest was dim and dark,
Save for the elves: and the sinister gnomes,
That in the Black Forest made their homes!

"Grandfather," cried the little ones,
At dawn in the hut by the meagre fire—
"There are no jewels like the sun's,—
We know—but they vanish away, and we tire;
May not the Christ-Child's goodness bring,
Even to us, of His bountiful joys
A real feast, and a song to sing,
And a real blessing and real toys?"
And they swallowed their black bread eagerly
As the old man kissed them and hurried away
With tears in his eyes, that they might not see—
For the poverty of their Xmas day!

The mournful song of the sighing pines
And the melody of the swirling snow
Soothed the gnomes in their mouldy mines,
And filled the air with its music low;
On the old man's ear came a tiny cry—
Out of the gloom, where the forest slept,
And ever anon, as the wind moaned by,
It came again—as an infant wept!

Quick to the rescue he hurried, and there,
All in the snow-drift at his feet,
Lay a nursling with golden hair,
And a smile that was strange and divinely sweet;
Came the thought to his 'wildered sense:
"What if the Christ-Child so hath come?"
He snatched the waif and back through the dense
And threatening forest he sped him home!

"Grandfather, hasten! The table is spread—
Oh the grace of this stranger child!
See, there 's a glory about his head,
And the sunset lingers where he has smiled!
Tell us, whence came this wondrous one,"
But the old man answered never a word,
And a melody died with the setting sun
Soft as the "song of a secret bird"!

Up from the graybeard's loving hold
Rose and hovered that babe in air,
Blessing the board and the bread so cold,
Blessing the little ones gathered there!
Into the twilight faded then
The sudden grace of that heavenly glow—
But the grandfather hurried forth again
And followed it into the night and snow.

Out from the forest vast and grim
Over the drift whence the Christ-Child sprang,
Lo! the strains of a heavenly hymn,
The thrilling music the shepherds sang—
The Christmas anthem! On he sped
But sudden paused in a new surprise,
Blooming there in the Child's snow bed
Grew wondrous flowers before his eyes!

"Christ's Anthems!" As he kneels and prays,
The hymns die out in the peaceful night.

How his old face in their golden blaze
Shines as he plucks the petals of light!
There were songs and a feast in the castle high
On the cliffs; but the faggot-gleaner's hearth
Glowed with the blessings of the sky—
Love and Mercy and "Peace on Earth."

THE OLD FLAG AGAIN

(March 4, 1897)

FLING out her glorious folds again,
Her Stripes and Stars exalt,
Until before the eyes of men
She glows from heaven's blue vault
Once more the banner of the free,
In deed, as well as name;
And cursèd let the craven be
Who furls our flag in shame!

Fling out her folds! Columbia knows
No dastards when the cry
Of her own sons, 'neath alien guns
Imprisoned, sounds hard by.
Fling out her folds! Let freemen feel
They 're not a living lie,
That rifled guns and ships of steel
Protect them where they fly.

There never was, nor shall there be
While winds and waters flow
A man, a State, by land or sea,
To lay their honor low!
And most we love their starry pride
When we remember how
To keep them stainless freemen died:
They shall be stainless now!

COBBLE BLOSSOMS

DEEP in its moss of golden green,
Where sunlight pranked the laughing scene,
And every little wandering wind
Found ripples cool and flowerets kind,
The violet's and the rose's breath
Have faded softly out to death.

The daisy and the goldenrod
Have withered gently to the sod,
Above which, when the butterfly
In Summer's livery floated by,
They shone in beauty; damp and cold
November breathed above their mould!

The wild flowers of the field and wood
Will bloom again, for God is good.
But what of man? The flowers that lie
Here in the streets, shall they, too, die—
Starved, ragged, prematurely old—
Of hunger and neglect and cold?

FREE CUBA

HERE 'S a heart for thy heart and a prayer for thy prayer,
And a nation of freemen thy perils to share;
Here 's joy for the news of thy victories won;
Now let thy machetes flash red to the sun!
Here 's a hand for thy hands, and a shout of acclaim
For the hour that free Cuba has won the proud name.
Oh, island of beauty, oh, gem of the sea,
May the stars in their courses do battle for thee!

The women whose love is the light of our land,
The men who for freedom forever will stand,
The children whose sympathy quickens to see
A serf in our seas where a free State should be;
The bone and the sinew, the brain and the heart
Of our glorious country have taken thy part,
Though doubter and dastard sit quibbling afar
On the rights of a tyrant, the court rules of war.

Thy sisters in bondage have long years ago
Won freedom, O Cuba, now strike the last blow!
Adown the long coast from the Lakes to the Horn
A continent waits for thy star to be born;
And the winds of the forest, the tides of the main
Will bear the glad tidings to mountain and plain,
O Cuba, fair Cuba, free Cuba to be,
That the banner of liberty floats over thee!

SOME DISHONORED DIVINITIES

I. VACUITY:

THERE 'S a wild spirit in the bowls that brim;
But over the spent chalice rests a spell
Of loveliness; 't is to the empty shell
Chaos calls soft through æther's ocean dim.

II. HATE:

How dark and hot her blood is! Hot it leaps
To sullen frenzy at a word, a name—
Blotting out friendship, honor, love, and fame,
As one black cloud whelms over moonlit deeps!

III. TO HASHISCH:

Hail, dream elixir, Babylon's great king,
Pillowed on beauty's bosom, shod with gold—
Once let thy torch inflame man's reason cold—
Is as a moth that 's like to burn his wing!

IV. ENVY:

Best spur to effort, foe to pale ennui,
Ambition were an orphan, and sweet Hope
A ghost still lingering on Avernus' slope,
If this dull, gray old world had none of thee!

V. OBLIVION:

Sweet lotos-orbed, velvet-footed maid,
That slippest o'er the wrinkled ocean's brim,
Garlanded with blue flowers of distance dim—
Is death the passport to thine Isles of Shade?

VI. WEARINESS:

Oh, the long, slow delight of rest begun—
Of sinews all unbending, like the bow's
That from her neck at dawn Diana throws
Forgetting now even Endymion!

AN APRIL DAWN

WHEN dawn unbars the pale gray gates
At which an April morning waits,
The west wind pauses, passing by,
To strew cloud blossoms in the sky,
And, perched upon a lonely pine,
A robin sings of auld lang syne.

The swift, wild horses of the sea
Toss their white manes in careless glee
Out on the bar, where all the night
They pawed, impatient for the light;
And, save their long and rhythmic tread,
Naught breaks the bird song's tiny thread.

Full on the background of the dawn
The stately pine's green crest is drawn,
In outlines bold and dark, but swift
As rough waves clash, or soft clouds lift,
The picture is forgot—so shrill,
So sweet, the robin's morning trill!

What is it pictures to thine eye,
Afar, an orchard's greenery,
Below an old house, gabled low,
Around which spring flowers love to grow
Rare bird, whose earliest melody
Echoes the sadness of good-by!

THE LADY OF DREAMS

HER voice comes along the wind
That falls at eve with fitful sighs,
Until I think I must be blind
Not to look up into her eyes;
Through all my veins the warm blood starts,
And then, and then—alas, I know
Not all Dan Cupid's magic arts
Could bring her from the long ago!

I hear the slipper on the stair,
My heart beats, ah, once more "possest"—
I turn, to greet my lady fair,
A pansy at her snowy breast,
A smile upon her warm red lips
Such as the moon smiles on the sea—
And oh, the sight of her 'd eclipse
The sun of Austerlitz for me!

It's odd, too, how the merest stir
Of young leaves in an idle breeze
Brings, out of nothing, thoughts of her,
And how I hear among the trees

The rustle of her skirts! No sound
Since Pan wooed Syrinx sets the air
So softly whispering to the ground
As does her fancied footfall there!

I 'll never meet her face to face,
My sweetheart with the breast of snow!
I may but conjure up her grace
And dream I loved her—long ago;
The sweetness of that lovelit dream
Alas, must still my soul's fond strife,
For, sad and strange as it may seem,
I never saw her in my life!

SKIPPER BROWN EYES

THE TWILIGHT TALE OF HER VOYAGE TO SLUMBERLAND

(To Emilie)

SHE sails away on the sea of dreams,
This little skipper with eyes of brown,
As the firefly's torch in the twilight gleams,
And the garish sun goes down;
Her bark floats over the grimy town
To Slumberland and its silver sea;
The spotless folds of her slumber gown
Are no whit fairer than she.

There are angel birds in the warm, still air,
And the skipper laughs with her eyes of brown,
As they sing to her old songs, sweet and rare,
While her bark billows up and down;
They sing of a prince of high renown,
And a princess ever so young and fair;
But where is the princess had ever a crown
Like the crown of her soft brown hair?

Cometh a storm o'er the silver sea,
That ebbs on the dreamer's land,

And the angel birds fade out to the lee
Of this singular slumber-strand;
Is there a harbor by angels planned,
From all storms, whatever they be,
From the wicked fairies of Slumberland
And the waves in its silver sea?

Up, like a flash, comes the little brown head,
And the brown eyes only see
A billowy blanket of silk outspread
On an ocean of dimity;
But it 's fearlessly the skipper will flee,
With a soft little barefoot tread,
By the chart she learned on`her bended knee,
To the haven of mother's bed.

JUNE

WHEN June unbinds her rosy zone
And fills the woods with rapture,
The poet knows his heart is gone—
And glories in the capture!
The dumb world watches as she goes,
Her beauty sets it crazy—
Now pausing here to pick a rose,
And there to drop a daisy!

Her eyes are deep as heaven's blue,
Now languishing, now laughing;
Now whispering: Oh, be true, be true—
And now divinely chaffing!
The dimple in her milk-white chin,
So she but smile, discovers
A pit they all might tumble in
To be done for—her lovers!

The amorous branches, overbold,
Catch at her as she passes,
Her tender footstep thrills the wold
And stirs the springing grasses;

The birds, with softly quivering wings,
Fly down on either shoulder:
No man may hear the song she sings,
No impious eye behold her!

But by the laughter of the brook,
The fragrance of the blossom,
We think we know the way she took
And how she leaped across 'em;
We hear her trailing robe—so sweet
Its scent on hill and hollow,
We long to see her flying feet
And cannot choose but follow!

ERICSSON'S RETURN

GREAT Norseland, now all hail!
Thou Viking-mother pale
Of heroes, on whose birth
The light not born of earth
Gleams from the shrouded pole; Valhalla holds his soul.
And now his body speed we home
In conqueror's pomp across the foam;
No blood-stained billows mark the progress of his bark,
But swift and silent o'er the sea
His war-ship bears him back to thee!

A thousand years ago
Thy sons 'gainst wind and floe
Found out our western land;
Foam-flecked, their venturous sail flew on thro' night and gale,
And theirs the furrow free,
Though lurked in every sea
The iceberg's mailed hand!

Not so sailed he who homeward comes
To-day in state; no beat of drums
Nor glint of spears, nor arrows' hail, nor bloody sword, nor
dinted mail

Attest his triumphs! From the stars
Upon the flag that floats above him,
Her victories, more renowned than war's.
Peace heralds, and a Nation love him!

As from Valhalla's cloud-kissed dome
The shades of heroes hail thee home
We cry: God help thee, glorious Swede
Who helped us in our hour of need!

THE NEW ALL SOULS' DAY

DEAR unforgotten dead, whose day
Comes once more with the circling year,
With each new touch of tender May
A tenderer memory holds you dear.

Broad as the vault of heaven's blue
Wells this new sympathy, and sweet
As are the drops of pity's dew
Come footfalls still of reverend feet.

Fond pilgrimage! From East and West
And North and South, each to his own,
With love for those we love the best
And tears for those who left us lone!

Columbia loves her soldier sons
Who died that she might live; each grave
Grows dearer as their echoing guns
Boom faint o'er fields they fought to save!

And so, with memories fond, and flowers
A grateful nation's grief has led
All chastened hearts these sacred hours
To dedicate to their dear dead!

IN MEMORIAM

J. R. B.

HUSHED are now the tender sighs
In the silence sweet of rest,
Gone the question from the eyes,
And the fever from the breast—
Where white violet and rose
Fading, too, in all their charms,
Find their loveliest repose
Nestling in my baby's arms.

On the brow so smooth and white
Dawns the beauty of a day
Hidden still from mortal sight
That shall shine for him away;
Blessing now his sweet release,
Folded by a higher will,
Here the dimpled hands at peace,
Show the angels' kisses still!

THE CHRIST-MASS TREE

A CEDAR grew in Lebanon,
That goodly mount beside the sea,
And breathed out to the morning sun
Her balmy odors, faint yet free;
The air was fine as silver spun,
The breeze blew aye from Calvary.

Down in the valleys, far below,
The mulberry and bearded grain
And the gray olive loved to grow,
Betwixt the mountain and the main;
The cedar towered on high; her slow,
Sweet fragrance filled the air with pain.

It was on Calvary there grew
That tree from whose accursed bough
(Or was it cedar, cypress, yew,—
It matters not, we love it now)
A cruel hand would one day hew
The cross on which He laid His brow.

And, lo! the thorn had leagues afar
With brooding sadness filled the breeze

And thrilled to greet the herald star,
That marked it lone among the trees—
And so, fond sinners that we are,
May we, too, share these memories!

Are there no wanderers by the way,
No little ones with bleeding feet,
No fainting souls that Hope might stay,
No hungry hearts that Love might greet?
Blow, breeze from Calv'ry, so we may
Aye find the Master's labor sweet!

Sweet pain that thrills the world with bliss,
Fond agony, that ransomed sin,
Whene'er the winds of Heaven kiss
The hills that shut the blue seas in,
May we, too, deem no pang amiss,
If to His love some soul we win!

EASTER

THE SONG OF THE ROBIN REDBREAST

HUSHED were the waves that through the long
 night sighing
Had flung themselves on the complaining shore;
In the dark west the restless winds were dying,
 For winds must rave and die, forevermore.

Far in the east, where foolish, fond Tithonus
 Once more released from his unwilling arms
The roseate Dawn—for he has never known us
 More Modern mortals who adore her charms—
There rose and fainted on the air, that trembled
 With prescience of a Day,—of days the best,
The golden song of spirits, half dissembled,
 Half swelling in a melody confest,
By all the air and sea forever blest.

Under their caps of snow the mountains quivered
 And shook with joy at that soft, swelling strain;
The brooks, in their half-frozen runnels, shivered,
 Then bounded on to the expectant main;

The silvery clouds that hung
Where those sweet notes were sung
Vibrated in a symphony divine.
The shadows 'gan to flee
Like ghosts across the sea,
And one wee bird, perched on a lonely pine,
Took up the theme and sang this song of mine:

Oh, mother dear, Jerusalem,
My heart goes out to thee!
The Nations pass and fail; to them
Thou art not even Bethelhem!
And yet, to me, thou art the gem
That sets His memory!

Prone 'gainst the Eastern sky He hung
On an accursed tree;
A thief on either side Him swung,
While soldiers on His mantle flung
Their dice, and Nature's heart was wrung
Such fearful sights to see!

Oh, cruel cross! oh, bleeding side!
Oh, brow of agony!
See, nails His poor white hands divide,
And ruddy drops pour in a tide!
While men, for whom He even died,
Doubt still if it be He!

Oh, stars and night and woe divine,
 'T was more than I could bear!
My own breast for each cruel tine
Bled, and I would His wounds were mine,
And mine the veins that poured that wine
 Of blood beyond compare!

Oh, agony! oh, cursed tree!
 Oh, Mary's mother-wails!
In vain I fluttered there to see
If but my beak could set Him free:
His torture was too strong for me—
 I could not draw the nails!

Yet here upon my breast I wear
 Thy seal, oh Blood of God!
Here the blest fount, that dyed the air
And crimsoned all the world so fair,
Since He has risen, I too may share
 With those for whom it flowed!

THE MIDWINTER GIRL

BRAVE midwinter roses
Bloom red in her cheeks,
Where the wind's kiss discloses
The posies he seeks.

There 's a fine faery clangor,
A wedding-bell tone,
All about her; her languor
Of lounging is flown.

"Incedit regina!"
No queen to her throne
Walks with majesty finer,
Yet all of her own!

Oh, where in all nature
Is beauty like hers—
A flower-fair creature
So bonny 'mid furs!

AN INVOCATION TO MARCH

MONTH the almanacs style vernal,
Meteorologic fraud,
By thy fits and starts infernal,
By thy blizzards blown abroad;

By the hearts thy conduct 's frozen
And then broken into pieces,
By the symbols thou hast chosen—
Lion's claws and lambkin's fleeces;

By thy wrecks upon old ocean,
By the flowrets thou hast frosted,
By thy bluster and commotion,
By our patience long exhausted;

By thy windy, wintry, wilful,
Wanton waste of worthless weather,
From our spring, already chillful,
Vamoose—get out altogether!

A LETTER TO MY WIFE

INTO the ranks of the Saracen horde,
Marking the way for his flashing sword;
Into the maze of the fight and the dance—
Of the steely sparks from the smitten lance;
Into the rush where the Arab steed
Shivered to feel his rider bleed;
Into the thick of the fray he cast
With a loving look, if, so be, his last,
With a clinging look that not death might loose,
The Douglas cast the Heart of the Bruce!

Into the battles of life he wore,
Into the din of the fight he bore,
Ever close to his faithful breast,
The heart of hearts that he loved the best!
And the heathen raged, and the sirens sang,
And the song of the sword on his armour rang,
And the cynics laughed that he wore that charm,
To nerve for the battle his good right arm!
For there 's never a charm in their smoothest art
Nor a shield to scatter their keenest dart
Like the charm of the shield of the loving heart!

Into the whirl of the busy town

Where the lord of to-day is the morrow's clown,
And lips that are false may be warm and red,

And a halo may shine 'round a wanton's head;
Where smiles are all that a friend may give

And love is but water that 's poured in a sieve,
There 's a charm I wear like the Heart of the Bruce,

In a clasp of love that no other may loose,
A heart bound fast by a golden chain

To my own, and I long with a tender pain
To be with you, my dearest, at home again!





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